



Board of Director's Policy Business Services 800 Series

Policy # 800.3

Fee Waiver Policy

Definition of Instructional Fees

Instructional fee or fees mean any monetary charge collected by Prairie Crossing Charter School (PCCS) from a student or the parents or guardian of a student as a prerequisite for the student's participation in any instructional program of PCCS. It is not defined as a fee when PCCS requires that a student provide his or her own ordinary supplies or materials (e.g. pencils, paper, notebooks) that are necessary to participate in any curricular or extracurricular program.

Prairie Crossing Charter School has a yearly books, materials, and activity fee per child. PCCS also charges fees for involvement in extracurricular activities and field trips. School fees do not include library fines and other charges made for the loss, misuse, or destruction of school property; charges for the purchase of pictures; charges for optional travel undertaken by a school club or group of students outside of school hours; charges for admission to school dances, athletic events, or other social events; or charges for optional community service programs (e.g. before- and after-school child care and recreation programs).

Students Eligible for Waiver

Each child's instructional fee is due by July 1st each year. For students that enroll in Prairie Crossing Charter School during the school year, this fee is due on their first day of attendance. The due dates for fees for extracurricular activities vary and are provided to students interested in those activities.

Fees may be waived for students whose family income falls within the United States Department of Agriculture guidelines for free or reduced price lunch and breakfast. Fees may also be waived for students whose families have suffered a significant loss of income due to death, severe illness, or injury in the family or unusual expenses incurred because of a natural catastrophe.

Any family unable to pay the books and materials, or needing extra time to pay the fee should submit the form below to the Executive Director **by June 30th** or the first day of attendance for students enrolling in PCCS during the school year. For fees for extracurricular activities, due dates will be provided with the information about each activity. The Executive Director will process the request within thirty (30) calendar days and reply to the family with a payment plan, fee waiver statement, or denial of request. PCCS shall decide waivers on a case-by-case basis in a non-discriminatory fashion and shall rely upon documentation submitted by the applicant. The Executive Director's decision can be appealed to the School Board President.

Payment plans will be provided for students whose families do not qualify for fees to be waived but whose children would be prohibited from attending Prairie Crossing Charter School or taking part in extracurricular activities unless a payment plan is provided. The Executive Director will review explanation for payment plan requests.

Notification to Parents/Guardian

PCCS's policy for the waiver of instructional fees shall be communicated in writing to the parents or guardian of all students enrolled in the PCCS near the beginning of July with the first bill or fee notice sent and any other time a notice of fees (e.g. for extracurricular activities) is sent to parents. PCCS also will state in all of its notices sent to parents who owe instructional fees that PCCS waives fees for persons unable to afford them in accordance with its policy and the procedure for applying for a fee waiver. A fee waiver application form also may be included with this notice when it is sent to parents. The notification will be in English, Spanish, or the home language of the parents, if it is

needed to ensure their understanding of the district's policy (if translation of the notice is not feasible, PCCS will use interpreters, e.g. other students or neighbors). The notice shall describe:

- PCCS's policy, including the criteria and other circumstances under which PCCS will waive school instructional fees or provide a payment plan for these fees;
- the instructional fees subject to waiver under the district's policy;
- the procedure to be used by parents in applying for a waiver of instructional fees;
- the procedure to be used by parents in resolving disputes concerning the waiver of instructional fees.

If the fee waiver policy and/or procedures are substantively amended, then parents of students enrolled in PCCS shall be notified in writing within thirty (30) calendar days following the adoption of the amendments.

Resolution of Disputes

If PCCS denies a request for a fee waiver or payment plan, then it shall mail a copy of its decision to the parents within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the request. The decision shall state the reason for the denial and shall inform the parents of their right to appeal, including the process and timelines for that action. The denial notice shall also include a statement informing the parents that they may reapply for a waiver or payment plan at any time during the school year, if circumstances change.

An appeal shall be decided within thirty (30) calendar days of the receipt of the parents' request for an appeal. Parents shall have the right to meet with the President of the PCCS Board of Directors, who will decide the appeal, in order to explain why the fee waiver or payment plan should be granted. If the appeal is denied, then PCCS shall mail a copy of its decision to the parents. The decision shall state the reason for the denial.

No fee shall be collected from any parent who is seeking an instructional fee waiver in accordance with PCCS's policy until the district has acted on the initial request or appeal (if any is made), and the parents have been notified of its decision.

Confidentiality

School records that identify individual students as applicants for or recipients of instructional fee waivers are subject to the Illinois School Student Records Act (105 ILCS 10/1 et seq.). Information from such records is confidential and may be disclosed only as provided in the Act.

Prohibition Against Discrimination or Punishment

No discrimination or punishment of any kind, including the lowering of grades or exclusion from classes, will be exercised against a student whose parents or guardians are unable to purchase required textbooks or instructional materials or to pay required fees.

Adoption Dates:

Adopted: April 2004

Amended: May 2007

Revised and Adopted: September 2009